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THE

METHODIST CHURCH

AND

SLAVERY.

BY CHARLES K. WHIPPLE.

NEW YORK:
AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, 5 BEEKMAN ST.
BOSTON: 21 CORNHILL.
1859.

Cornell Univ.
8 FEB 1905

THE METHODIST CHURCH AND SLAVERY.

What is the relation of the Methodist Church to Slavery? We shall look, for information upon this point, first to its 'Discipline' and other official documents, and next to the statements of its Bishops, ministers, elders and lay members.

The constitution and rules, the articles and canons of the Methodist Church, are contained in a little volume of 240 pages, known as 'The Discipline,' and entitled—'The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church.' The latest edition, (of 1856,) from which we quote, is certified as correct, and recommended to all Methodists as needful, 'next to the word of God,' for their instruction and guidance, by the signatures of the Bishops, as follows:

Beverly Waugh,	Matthew Simpson,
Thomas A. Morris,	Osmon C. Baker,
Edmund S. Janes,	Levi Scott.
Edward R. Ames,	

This volume, after the 'Articles of Religion,' gives the 'General Rules' of the Methodist Church. In this chapter, following the statement that a religion really fixed in the soul will be shown by its fruits, and that those fruits must be shown—'By doing no

harm, by *avoiding evil* of every kind, *especially that which is most generally practised*,' comes the following specification, distinguished by *italics* among the things to be avoided :—

'*The buying and selling of men, women and children, with the intention to enslave them.*'

Chapter iii., of Part I. of the Discipline, treats—'Of the Rights and Privileges of our Colored Members,' and its first specification is as follows :—

'I. Our colored preachers and official members shall have all the privileges which are usual to others in Quarterly Conferences, WHERE THE USAGES OF THE COUNTRY DO NOT FORBID IT.' p. 86.

This concession to the *usages* of a slaveholding country, in a book of religious principles and rules, addressed to men presumed already to be Christians, is somewhat remarkable; but the closing chapter of Part III., expressly devoted to the subject of Slavery, makes still greater concessions. We quote it entire, as follows :—

'CHAPTER VII.

OF SLAVERY.

Quest.—What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?

Ans.—1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery: therefore, no slaveholder *shall be eligible to any official station in our church hereafter*, WHERE THE LAWS OF THE STATE IN WHICH HE LIVES WILL ADMIT OF EMANCIPATION, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.

2. When any *travelling preacher* becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit

his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, IF IT BE PRACTICABLE, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the law of the State in which he lives.

3. All our preachers shall *prudently* enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching THEIR SLAVES to read the word of God; and to allow them time to attend upon the public worship of God on our regular days of divine service.' pp. 212, 213.

John Wesley declared slavery to be—'*the sum of all villanies.*'

When the Bishops, his successors, in answer to their own question, above, declare themselves 'as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery,' and commence their rule upon this subject with the words—'therefore, no slaveholder'—should we not naturally look for an absolute prohibition of the receiving, or retaining, slaveholders in church-membership?

We find it, however, assumed in the above rules, as a matter of course, that some of the members, and some of the local preachers, will be slaveholders, and remain such, without rebuke; and also, that wherever iniquity shall be framed into a law so atrocious as to forbid emancipation, there those who practise it shall be eligible to any official station in the Methodist Church, even though this law may have been made by their own votes as citizens!

It is well known that there was made, in 1845, a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two parts, Northern and Southern. The volume we are

examining (bought at the Methodist book-store in Boston) says nothing whatever about this separation, and does not proclaim itself to be the Discipline of the Methodist Church *North*. Its provisions in favor of slave*holders* (in spite of the rule first quoted, against the *buying* and *selling* of slaves) look as if designed for the Southern Church. How is this doubtful point to be settled?

The answer to this question is found only by examining the 'Boundaries of the Annual Conferences,' pp. 158—173, from which it appears that *all* the free States and Territories are embraced under its jurisdiction, *and also the following slave States*, either entire or in part:—

Delaware,	Maryland,
Virginia,	Kentucky,
Missouri,	Arkansas,

Texas.

The following questions then arise for our consideration:—

1. Are these rules, now existing in the 'Discipline' of the Northern Methodist Church, and tolerating not only unjust distinctions between white and colored preachers, and white and colored church-members, but the actual holding of slaves by church-members, and also by *local* preachers—are these *obsolete* rules, carelessly suffered to remain in the Discipline, though disused in practice; or do preachers and members of the Northern Church actually use the shameful license thus given?

2. In the division of 1845, did the Northern portion

of the Church withdraw on account of the slaveholding practised by the Southern portion?

3. After the division was made, did the Northern Church, and does it now, receive and retain *slaveholders* as church-members in its Conferences in the border slave States, or only such persons in those States as refuse to hold slaves?

We shall present evidence upon these points from the testimony of well-known, trustworthy and responsible Methodist ministers and church-members; and we shall first answer the second question.

The division of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1845, though made upon a point connected with slavery, was neither a protest against slaveholding by the Northern Church, nor a separation made by that Church at all; it was a secession by the Southern Church, because the Northern brethren, who had permitted the enlargement and the strengthening of slavery at several successive periods, and in various ways, would not go the further length of consenting that the *Bishops* should be slaveholders!

The latest of the triumphs of slavery, in the Methodist Church, referred to, had been carried at the General Conference of 1840; among these were the adoption of the two resolutions following:—

1. A resolution offered by Rev. Dr. Ignatius A. Few, seconded by Dr. George Peck, and adopted by the Conference, 74 to 46, as follows:—

'Resolved, That it is inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher among us to permit colored persons to give testimony against white persons in any

State where they are denied that privilege in trials at law.'—*Journal*, vol. II, p. 60.

2. A resolution (the conclusion of a report made by a Committee of nine, upon a memorial, presented from fifteen official members of Westmoreland Circuit, Baltimore Conference, complaining that ordination had been withheld from some of their local preachers, *merely* because they were slaveholders,) adopted by the Conference, as follows:—

'Resolved, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences assembled, That, under the provisional exception of the general rule of the Church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in States or Territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and cannot, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination.'—*Journal*, vol. II., p. 171.

Since the General Conference of 1840 had so far endorsed the doctrine that slaveholding should be no bar to the ministry, it is not strange that at their next session, 1844, one of the *Bishops* of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. James O. Andrew, was found to be a slaveholder.

The Committee on Episcopacy were directed to inquire into the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew, and report them to the General Conference the next day. They did so, and presented a report, containing a

statement drawn up by Bishop Andrew himself, admitting that he held the legal relation of slaveholder and claiming the right to hold it.

The Bishops united in an Address to the Conference, speaking of this admitted and defended slaveholding as 'the *embarrassment* of Bishop Andrew,' and earnestly recommending the postponement of further action in his case until the ensuing General Conference, four years after. The Conference, however, were not willing to let the matter rest thus, and finally adopted the following, by a vote of 110 to 68:

'Whereas, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing of any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of his office as long as this *impediment* remains.'—*Journal* for 1844, pp. 65, 66.

A full account of the proceedings of the General Conference in this case, with the most important official papers connected with it, and specimens of speeches made on both sides, may be found in Rev. Dr. James Dixon's 'Methodism in America,' pp. 424-462. A brief statement is made of it, too, in a recent pamphlet, by Rev. H. Mattison, of the Black River (N. Y.) Conference, entitled 'The Impending Crisis;

of 1860: or, the Present Connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church with Slavery, and her duty in regard to it.' Of the action of the General Conference in regard to Bishop Andrew, (expressed in the foregoing preamble and resolution,) Mr. Mattison justly says—p. 35—

'No complaint is here made on moral grounds against episcopal slaveholding. It is solely on the ground that a slaveholding Bishop would not be well received in New England and other Northern States. Besides, the Bishop was left a Bishop still—aye, and a slaveholding Bishop, with his name in the Discipline and Hymn-book, and drawing his salary the same as other Bishops.'

And he adds, briefly sketching the secession, and the grounds on which, and the party by which, it was made—

'The Southern delegates, finding that a slight check was about to be put upon slavery, so far as the episcopacy was concerned, first protested, then got a plan of separation adopted, and finally went home and seceded, taking with them most of the membership in the slaveholding States. In due time they sued the Book Agents, and *pro-slavery judges* gave them a large share of the Church property; and they now constitute the 'Methodist Episcopal Church South,' and are breeding, buying, selling, owning, and whipping negroes to their hearts' content, having stripped every thing out of the Discipline that would even forbid their bishops from going into the African slave-trade.'—pp. 35, 36.

The action referred to in the last clause of this extract was taken May 19th, 1858, by the fourth

'General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,' held at Nashville, Tennessee, and is as follows:—

Whereas, The rule in the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, forbidding 'the buying and selling of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them,' is ambiguous in its phraseology, and liable to be construed as antagonistic to the institution of slavery, in regard to which the church has no right to meddle, except in enforcing the duties of masters and servants, as set forth in the Holy Scriptures; and whereas, a strong desire for the expunction of said rule has been expressed in nearly all parts of our ecclesiastical connection; therefore,

Resolved, 1. By the delegates of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in General Conference assembled, that the rule forbidding 'the buying and selling of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them,' be expunged from the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Resolved, 2. That in adopting the foregoing resolution, this Conference expresses no opinion in regard to the African slave-trade, to which the rule in question has been 'understood' to refer.

The vote on these resolutions stood—Ayes, 140; nays, 8; absentees, 3. The debates and proceedings of the Conference are reported in full in the Nashville *Christian Advocate*.

Before leaving the proceedings of a Committee which expunged this General Rule, because it was 'liable to be construed as antagonistic to the institution

of slavery,' with which they affirm that 'the church has no right to meddle' (except in the way of protecting it)—we will give two specimens of their action in regard to practices which they really wished to oppose.

In regard to dress, the following was adopted: (*Christian Advocate*, June 1st.)

'*Question*—Shall we insist on the rule concerning dress?

'*Answer*—By all means. This is no time to give encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore let each preacher in charge direct the attention of those committed to his care to the general rule on this subject, and to the Holy Scriptures on which it is based; mildly yet earnestly urging them to keep the same.'

And, in regard to sundry other evils, the following: (*Ib.*)

'*Ques.* 2. How shall we guard against bribery, dancing, attending circuses and theatres, Sabbath-breaking, and the other evils forbidden in the general rules?

'*Ans.* 1. Preach expressly on them, and circulate tracts denouncing them, whenever necessary.

'2. Let the leaders closely examine and exhort every person to put away the accursed things.

'3. Let the people be admonished that none who practise any of these evils can remain in our Church.

'4. In denouncing bribery, strongly advise our people to discountenance all treats given by candidates before or at elections, and not to be partakers, in any respect, of such iniquitous practices.'

Such are the provisions inserted in that 'Discipline' of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, from which the general rule on slavery is expunged.

Having seen that the division in the Methodist Church was made by the act of its Southern, not of its Northern portion—and that the Northern church includes under its jurisdiction seven slaveholding States [wholly or in part]—and that the 'Discipline' of the Northern Church still retains the allowance of slaveholding, and of unjust distinctions between its white and colored members—we have now to inquire, Are slaveholders still tolerated as members, in good standing, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North?

In evidence upon this point, we first present a letter published in *Zion's Herald*, [Boston] in October, 1857, from a minister of the Providence Conference :—

Mr. Editor: Will you allow a word of correction in respect to one or two sentences of an editorial headed 'Our South-western Border,' in the *Herald* of Sept. 16th? I feel assured you wish to state the truth, and would not have made those statements if you had been personally acquainted with the facts in the case. Speaking of the objections many have to the appropriation of missionary money to build up pro-slavery churches in the Border Conferences, you say: 'Our Church is there decidedly an anti-slavery Church.' Again, 'Our Church is the great anti-slavery vanguard in those States.' I wish it were even so; then would there be hope for our Church and our country. But nothing is further from the truth.

Some months since, I resolved to ascertain personally the facts in the case. I travelled extensively in Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky and Virginia, and the result of that thorough examination was, that I found no Methodists more intensely pro-slavery in Alabama, Louisiana, or in any of the 'fire-eating'

parts of the South, than I found the members of our mission Churches to be in the Border Conferences; they utterly abjure the name of abolitionists, or of having any sympathy with the anti-slavery movements in the free States. It matters not how many slaves a man owns, it is no objection to his becoming a member of those mission Churches. It is true, as you set forth in that article, that the Church South charge the members of our Church in the Missouri, Arkansas and Kentucky Conferences with belonging to an anti-slavery body. And now, if our membership there could or would admit the truthfulness of the charge, and reply, 'What you think our disgrace, we consider our *highest glory*, and are ready to acknowledge that we intend to labor in all proper ways for the freedom of the slave,' I should be in favor of pouring out our money like water to sustain them. I wish that there was some proof that they are the vanguard of freedom's army; but, alas! on the contrary, they most unequivocally and categorically deny the charge, that any anti-slavery blood is in their veins. or that any action of the General Conference can be pointed out to prove that the Church North is abolitionized. They tell them truthfully, that the division of 1844 did not turn on the hinge of the sin of slavery, but on the minor and non-essential point, whether a bishop might hold slaves or not. They remind them of the thousands of slaves held without a word of rebuke by the membership, in six of the Conferences of the Northern Church; that travelling preachers even, in those Conferences, can have their houses filled up with slaves, have all the avails of slave labor, if the wife's father, or some convenient friend holds the title deed. They quote to their southern calumniators, as perfect extinguishers, the hair-spun and sophistical arguments of those who are wearing out life in

the *honorable work* (?) of showing that slavery is 'constitutionally' in the Church, and encompassed and defended with brazen armor. And I am only sorry to say, that the pro-slavery course of the Church North furnishes them with abundance of material to silence those who accuse them of belonging to an anti-slavery Church.

The position of the Northern and Southern M. E. Churches in the disputed territory may be somewhat illustrated by reference to the Old and New School Presbyterian Churches in the South; they are crowding and jostling, each trying to obtain the advantage of the other, filling the community with bitterness and sectarianism, while both are there heartily pro-slavery. The points upon which they differ are so trivial, that they ought never to be mentioned among Christian brethren.

H. C. Atwater.

The editor of *Zion's Herald*, Rev. Dr. Haven, commenting upon this letter of Mr. Atwater, says:—

Now we place implicit confidence in his testimony based on actual observation. There never was a grosser mistake—to call it by no graver name—than that insisted upon at the last General Conference, and repeated earnestly since, that mercenary slaveholding does not exist undisturbed in *some* of the societies connected with the M. E. Church. This fact is asserted by Rev. J. D. Long, and others who must know. It is asserted by our correspondent from actual observation. It is asserted, too, by a whole class of witnesses, consisting of ministers of the M. E. Church, South, whom, of course, our friends on the Border will and must allow to be good witnesses, since they interchange pulpits with them, and invite them to preach at our camp-meetings.

and to dedicate our Churches to Almighty God. As a specimen of their testimony, we give the following from the Richmond *Christian Advocate*, italics and all :

'Sir, is it not known to *you* and to *me*, and to *many, many others*, that in the Church in which Bishop Simpson and Dr. McClintock are ministers, and from which they were delegates to the Wesleyan Methodist Church, there are thousands and thousands of slaves, and that these slaves are owned and worked from sun to sun, by the *members* and *ministers* of said Church? Will Bishop Simpson, or Dr. McClintock, or the New York *Express*, or any one else, undertake to deny that there are many slaveholders and slave-workers among the *private* members, and *official* members, and *ministers* of the Northern division of the M. E. Church? They will not try it. It cannot be denied.'

And again :

'If you never knew it before, learn it now from me, *the preachers and people in the Northern division of the Methodist Episcopal Church hold slaves as truly as those in the Southern division.* Now, try and remember this in future.'

Now this is only a specimen. Others assert that they are held for life, and *bought and sold* at pleasure. It is literally true that we could cover this page with extracts from Southern papers reiterating this fact, and any of the writers, if he happens to be a talented preacher, would be invited to aid in the dedication of one of the Churches in New York city or New Jersey, and take his seat in the pulpit by the side of Bishop Simpson. The writers, therefore, cannot be regarded as unworthy of credit.

The two extracts following are from numbers of the *Northern Independent*, (the anti-slavery Methodist

paper published at Auburn, N. Y.) published in April, 1857:

RIDICULOUS DISCRIMINATION.

As the Discipline now stands, slaveholding in the ministry is the rule, non-slaveholding the exception. We let all preachers hold slaves if they will consent to be local and unordained. We will consent to ordain them, and let them travel, slaveholders though they be, if wicked slaveholders are disposed to make a law forbidding emancipation. In view of these facts, the inquiry, 'Are any Methodist preachers slaveholders?' cannot be answered in the negative, unless by some one who is personally acquainted with all our preachers, both local and travelling. Certainly there is nothing in the Discipline to prevent great numbers of ministers engaging in this abominable practice. Nor does the history of our Church, thus far, afford any ground to infer that preachers have not availed themselves of the absence of a prohibitory statute against this sin. Indeed, it is a well-known fact that many of our local preachers are slaveholders. No intelligent man will presume to deny this statement. There never has been any objection to local preachers holding slaves—the practice is as free to them as to any other members of the Church.

So much, then, for the probabilities and possibilities of ministerial slaveholding among the Methodist preachers. But the distinction itself is a burlesque. We might just as well divide drunkenness into lay and clerical, prohibiting the latter, and allowing the former. What if we were to deny our ministry, especially our travelling and ordained ministers, the right to steal, and so specify it in the book of Discipline! would not such a prohibition be justly regarded an outrage on all morality? Cer-

tainly a people who could thus discriminate between clerical and lay theft would not deserve to be considered as violently opposed to stealing. The fact of a prohibition restricted to the clergy would show that, in our estimation, there was no moral obliquity in theft, and that expediency alone determined us to restrict the practice to laymen or mere local preachers. Such a prohibition would be ridiculous, nay, monstrous, but not one whit more so than is our rule forbidding 'travelling preachers,' and them only, to hold slaves. This act of prohibition shows what estimate we place upon the practice; we treat it as inexpedient, not as immoral.

SLAVERY IN THE BORDER CONFERENCES.

We were conversing, the other day, with an intelligent and influential member of one of the 'Border Conferences,' who had no sympathy with our views on the subject of slavery, but who was a frank, open, truth-telling man; and desirous of knowing the facts in the case, we asked him if slaveholding, breeding, buying and selling, existed among our membership in the Border Conferences; he said it did. We asked him if such cases were made a matter of discipline, and he answered, No. We asked him further, if any of our preachers held slaves, and he said they did. He said there were slaves held by members of the Baltimore Conference! He did not know how it was in all the Border Conferences; he only spoke of those with which he was acquainted. He stated he believed the Philadelphia Conference was now free from slavery. One of its members did hold slaves, but, upon being waited upon by a committee appointed by the Conference, and in reference to the matter, *he transferred the ownership of them to his wife!* This satisfied the committee and the Conference, and he went on his

way rejoicing! We told him these things were denied on the floor of the last General Conference, by the representatives of the Border Conferences; he said he was aware of the fact, but they were nevertheless true. For ourselves, from all we can learn, we have no doubt of the correctness of Dr. McFerrin's 'statements' in regard to the complicity of our Church in the great sin of slavery. Our official editors ought to be careful how they throw stones at their Southern brethren. Their glass houses are in imminent peril.

The question of principle does not divide the Church North from the Church South, so far as its practice is concerned. It is a question of *quantity* more than of *quality*—a question of retail *versus* wholesale. The Church South does a wholesale business in human slavery; the North, a retail business in this abomination. On the score of consistency, the South has decidedly the advantage. It says slavery is a divine institution, and consequently takes it to its bosom The Church North says, 'it is the vilest thing that ever saw the sun,' and yet refuses to thrust it out of its communion! We hope the facts will be dragged out into the light, that we may know the extent of our guilt as a Church in this matter.

The statements of Dr. McFerrin, alluded to and vouched for in the last of the above extracts, are quoted by Rev. H. Mattison, of the Black River (N. Y.) Conference, with remarks, as follows, p. 70 of his 'Impending Crisis of 1860':

In December, 1856, Dr. McFerrin, editor of the Nashville *Christian Advocate*, addressed several letters to Bishop Morris [of the Northern Church] through the columns of his paper. In the first of these letters he makes the following declarations:

'You have this day many large slaveholders in your division of the Church. You know that in Maryland and Virginia, you have hundreds, yea, thousands of members who hold slaves; that you have ordained deacons and elders in the ministry of your Church who are slaveholders. You yourself have ordained to the office and work of the ministry many a slaveholder. Why, then, in the name of our common Christianity, should the Southern Church be persecuted and denounced, because she does what your own branch of the Church constantly practises? Let us see. The Methodist Episcopal Church South has in her communion slaveholders. So has the Methodist Episcopal Church North. The Methodist Episcopal Church South has in the ministry ordained deacons and elders who are slaveholders. So has the Methodist Episcopal Church North. These slaveholders in the South were elected to the work and office of the ministry by the Annual Conferences of the South. So were those elected by the Conferences belonging to the Northern division. They were ordained by the laying on of the hands of the bishop. Bishop Waugh, Bishop Morris, and Bishop Janes, to my certain knowledge, have each ordained slaveholders to the office of deacon and elder. Where, then, is the difference? Perhaps the principal difference, and the only one worth mentioning, is that the South, occupying a much larger slave territory than the North, has a greater number of ministers and members connected with slavery than are found in the North! Yet the principle is the same. And your late General Conference refused to make non-slaveholding a test of membership. True, a majority was in favor of inserting a rule to that effect, but not a constitutional majority; so that your Discipline tolerates slaveholders in the ministry and membership. Where, then, in view of these facts, is there cause for a war upon the Southern Church, especially as waged by those who call themselves conservative men?'

If the facts here alleged are true (and we have every reason to believe they are), there is much cogency in Dr. McFerrin's reasoning. 'Thou that sayest, A man should not steal, dost thou steal?' We are hardly prepared to cast the mote out of the eye of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, blind as she is, till we get the beam out of the eye of the Methodist Episcopal Church North. For slavery to cast out slavery, is too much like casting out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Indeed, in one respect the Southern Church have the advantage of us—they *profess nothing better* than pro-slavery, and justify themselves by the Bible; while we condemn slaveholding; profess 'anti-slavery;' and yet have thousands of slaveholders in the Church. In other words, we are an 'anti-slavery' slaveholding Church! p. 70.

We will now give some extracts in which the relation borne by individuals of the Northern Methodist church to slavery is stated by themselves, under their own names.

The following advertisement is taken from the Cambridge (Maryland) *Democrat*, where it is made conspicuous by the prefixed figures of a black male and a black female runaway:

$300 REWARD.—Ran away from the subscriber, from the neighborhood of Town Point, on Saturday night, 24th inst., my negro man, Aaron Cornish, about 35 years old. He is about 5 feet 10 inches high, black, good looking, rather pleasant countenance, and carries himself with a confident manner. He went off with his wife Daffney, a negro woman belonging to Reuben E. Philips. I will give the above reward if taken out of the county,

and $200 if taken in the county; in either case to be lodged in Cambridge (Md.) jail.

Oct. 28, 1857. 'LEVI D. TRAVERS.

It is testified by Rev. J. D. Long, Rev. J. Mayland McCarter, and Rev. J. S. Lame, that Mr. Travers is a wealthy local preacher in the Northern Methodist Church, on Taylor's Island, Dorchester County, Maryland, within the bounds of the Philadelphia Conference. Mr. Travers himself admits this, in a letter signed with his own name, dated Taylor's Island, Feb. 12, 1858, and published in the Cambridge (Maryland) *Eagle*, in which, after affirming his love for the Methodist Church as his spiritual mother, he declares—

'I am a slaveholder. I hold twenty slaves (right or wrong) under the sanction of the Constitution of the United States and the laws of Maryland. I hold them nearly all by inheritance; one half as the inheritance of my wife; of the other half, a portion I inherited from my father and son, a part were born of my slaves, and a part purchased. * * These slaves I have in my own family, and upon my lands, some of them acting as overseers. Now as a slaveholder I cannot conceive that as such I am rebelling against the righteous government of God.'

The following advertisement (with prefixes as above) appeared in the same paper Nov. 24th, 1857, and may also be found on p. 80 of 'Border Methodism and Border Slavery, by Rev. J. Mayland McCarter of the Philadelphia Annual Conference':—

$2,000 REWARD.—Ran away from the subscriber, on Saturday night, 24th inst., fourteen head of negroes, viz.: 4 men, 2 women, one boy, and

seven children. Kit is about 35 years old, 5 feet 6 or 7 inches high. Joe is about 30 years old, very black, his teeth are very white, and is about 5 feet 8 inches high. Henry is about 22 years old, of dark chestnut color, and large front teeth. Joe is about 20 years old, heavy built and black. Tom is about 16 years old, light chestnut color. Susan is about 35 years old, dark chestnut color, and rather stout built speaks rather slow, and has with her 4 children varying from 1 to 7 years old. Leah is about 28 years old, about 5 feet high, dark chestnut color, with three children, 2 boys and 1 girl, from 1 to 8 years old. I will give $1,000 if taken in the county, $1500 if taken out of the county and in the State, and $2000 if taken out of the State; in either case to be lodged in Cambridge jail, so that I can get them again; or I will give a fair proportion of the above reward if any part are secured.

SAMUEL PATTISON,
Oct. 26th, 1857. Near Cambridge, Md.

P. S.—Since writing the above, I have discovered that my negro woman Sarah Jane, 25 years old, stout built, and chestnut color, has also run off.

S. P.

Of this person (whose residence is within the bounds of the Philadelphia Conference) and of his advertisement, Rev. J. D. Long says, in *Zion's Herald*—

If the church regarded slaveholding as sinful in the same sense that she regards drunkenness as sinful, hundreds of our members would immediately let the oppressed go free. But alas! for us, the church for thirty years in Maryland has lost her conscience and testimony against slavery. I have listened time and again to instructions to young preachers, given at or before ordination by our venerable bishops, but

never heard one insinuate that it was a preacher's duty to instruct masters to liberate their slaves. Dead and profound silence has been practised with regard to slavery. Hence our members have grown up under the impression that men and women, made of the same blood as themselves, are their property in the same sense that a horse or a cow is. Hence advertisements like the above frequently appear in the county papers, signed by members of the M. E. Church. Mr. Pattison is a member of high standing in the M. E. Church in Dorchester County, Md. I know Mr. Pattison personally, and I have no doubt that he feeds and clothes his slaves as well as any other slaveholder in or out of the church.

We have now a yet more disgraceful demonstration to present; where the ministers of a Northern Conference declare themselves 'as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery,' and yet, in the same document, show themselves favorable to slavery and adverse to abolition, and seek to have this made the permanent policy of the Methodist Church. We quote from Rev. H. Mattison's 'Impending Crisis of 1860,' pp. 36-7:

On the 7th of April, 1847, the Philadelphia Conference, then in session at Wilmington, Delaware, addressed a special Pastoral Address to the slaveholders of Northampton and Accomac counties, Virginia, disclaiming all anti-slavery tendencies; professing to be as pro-slavery as the Southern Church; pointing to their antecedents in proof of their conservatism; and entreating them to remain quietly with the Northern portion of the Church. This address is entitled 'Pastoral Address of the Philadelphia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal

Church, to the Societies under its care within the bounds of the Northampton and Accomac Circuits, dated April 7, 1847.'

In this remarkable Address we find the following very explicit passages:

'We learn that the simple cause of the unhappy excitement among you is, that some suspect us, or affect to suspect us, of being abolitionists. Yet no particular act of the Conference, or any particular member thereof, is adduced as the ground of the erroneous and injurious suspicion. We would ask you, brethren, whether the conduct of our ministry among you for sixty years past ought not to be sufficient to protect us from this charge—whether the question we have been accustomed, for a few years past, to put to candidates for admission among us, namely, *Are you an abolitionist?* and without each one answered in the negative he was not received, ought not to protect us from the charge—whether the action of the last Conference on this particular matter, ought not to satisfy any fair and candid mind that we are not, and do not desire to be abolitionists? The views and purposes of the last Conference to which we refer, were expressed in the words below, which we must believe have not been generally read in your community, or the apprehensions which have been so earnestly expressed would never have been entertained. The words of the Conference are:

"The committee, to whom was referred a certain preamble and resolution on the subject of slavery and abolition, recommend the following report:

That we, the members of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; but at the same time we know our calling too well to interfere with matters not properly belonging to the Christian ministry. We stand, in relation to slavery and abolition, where we have always stood, and where we expect to stand, 'walking by the same rule and minding the same things;' and

ask that our action in the past may be taken as an index to our action in the future; therefore,

"1. Resolved, That we will abide by the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church as it is; and will resist every attempt to alter it in reference to slavery, so as to change the terms of membership.

"2. Resolved, That we sincerely deprecate all agitation of the exciting subjects which have unhappily divided the Church; and, impressed with the vital importance, especially for these times, of the apostolic injunction, 'Be at peace among yourselves,' we will, as far as lies in our power, 'follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.'

"Upon presenting this paper to you, in which we say, 'We stand, in relation to slavery and abolition, where we have always stood,' it is proper that we should remind you of the fact, that the provisions in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church North, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, with respect to slavery, are precisely the same, even to the very words. We cannot, therefore, see how we can be regarded as abolitionists, without the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church South being considered in the same light,' &c.

"Wishing you all heavenly benediction, we are, dear brethren, yours in Christ,

J. P. Durbin,
J. Kennady,
Ignatius T. Cooper,
Wm. H. Guilder,
Joseph Castle,
} *Committee.*"*

Wilmington, Del., April 7, 1847.

This Address, written but a few years after the Southern secession, shows how far slavery had gone in corrupting even those who had no pecuniary interest in it.

* History of the Great Secession, by Dr. Elliot, p. 1083, Document 72.

When the fact of slaveholding allowed in the Methodist church can no longer be denied, its apologists resort to the hypothesis of 'good treatment.' When the particulars of this claim of good treatment are inquired into, it will be found even to pretend to include very little more than good treatment for horses; namely, sufficient food, clothing and shelter, and not to be whipped 'unless they deserve it.' Let us look away, for a moment, from the monstrousness of the pretence that a man *can* be well treated while he is compelled to remain under the supreme control of another man, and let us read the testimony of a Methodist minister as to the sort of food, clothing and shelter ordinarily provided by Methodist slaveholders for Methodist slaves:—

December 23, 1857.

MR. EDITOR: My last communication closed with the announcement of my arrival on my southern circuit. Having heard much discussion on the subject of slavery, and having heard the conservatives magnify the Christian conduct of the master, and the generally happy condition of the slaves, I am frank to confess that my mind was favorably impressed with regard to the institution, and I designed to apologize for, if not to defend, the system.

My host being leader of the colored class, I took pleasure in occasionally accompanying him and leading the class, and we frequently had uproarious times. In addressing these sable sons and daughters of the Most High, I termed them brothers and sisters; but the good brother told me he did not apply these filial and fraternal terms to the members of his colored class; he did not think it proper! Said I, 'What do you call them, brother?' 'Well, I *call*

them aunts, uncles, Tom, Dick, or Harry !'—reminding me of the words of Clement the IVth, who having ascended the papal chair, returned the bow of the congratulating ambassadors and others. When the master of ceremonies told his Holiness that he should not have returned their salute, 'Oh ! I beg your pardon,' said he, 'I have not been Pope long enough to forget good manners.'

But, Mr. Editor, it came to pass, in the travel of time, that your humble correspondent and his family moved to the parsonage, provided by the munificence of the circuit. It was a large country house, situated in the centre of an extensive farm, the plantation being tilled by slaves. A part of them were owned by a steward of the circuit. The colored people occupied that nondescript apartment, the quarter, or kitchen, attached to the house; they were allowanced, as it is technically termed here, that is, lived by the steelyards; with the abuse of abundance they could not be charged.

Their magnificent, may I not say princely entertainment, for a fortnight, consisted of one peck unsifted corn meal, ten pounds of pork, or rather rancid bacon, and one quart of molasses. Often have I seen those negroes, property, too, of that wealthy Methodist, work in the sultry sun till 12 o'clock at noon, and then come to the kitchen to mix and cook their chicken feed for dinner, and on bended knees from my wife would beg a little salt. Their bedchamber was a strange scene of dirt, confusion and solitude; black with the smoke of burnt pine knots, strewn with rags and the plucked feathers of stolen chickens. The bed consisted of a few rotten rags spread on a soft plank, and a few more tatters for covering; but, as these people seldom remove their clothing when they retire, they have not so great a demand for counterpanes.

I drew some comfort from the thought that these cases were extreme, and seldom paralleled; but a pious and very wealthy member of one of the churches on the circuit gave me a special invitation to return from church with him, as he wished to converse with me. As we entered his house, he informed me that one of his colored girls had gone to church, got 'shouting happy,' and had returned in a trance; or at least, her powers of locomotion seemed destroyed, and she had not done any work for two days. He wished me to see her, and pass an opinion on her case. I accompanied him to the kitchen loft, and there my unsophisticated eye saw the same kind of entertainment that I had witnessed before. Since then, I have learned to wonder at nothing of this sort.

This is a portion of one of a series of letters signed 'Junius,' published in *Zion's Herald*, and written by Rev. J. S. Lame, of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, who was afterwards driven, by a variety of persecutions, from the Southern circuit to which he had been appointed, on account of the exposures made in these letters of the customary treatment of slaves among Methodists. These 'Junius letters,' with an account of the circumstances preceding and following their publication, have been reprinted, by the author, in a pamphlet entitled 'Maryland Slavery and Maryland Chivalry.'

We have taken no account, in this article, of the small bodies of Methodists who have, at various times, seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church in this country, but have designed to speak only of the two great Northern and Southern bodies which form the bulk of American Methodism, and mainly of the

former. The latest estimate of the membership of each (carefully compiled by the editor of *The Wesleyan*, who states his own connection of WESLEYAN METHODISTS, a body entirely free from complicity with slavery, as amounting to 21,565,) is as follows, including travelling and local preachers:—

Methodist Episcopal Church, North, 970,587.
" " " South, 707,555.

What is to be said, by way of summary, of the relation of these two immense bodies to the sin of slaveholding?

The 'Discipline' of the Southern Church does not forbid it; the preachers and members of that body are united in defending, perpetuating and extending it.

The 'Discipline' of the Northern Church forbids it only to travelling preachers, and to them only under certain circumstances; it allows its members to hold slaves, wherever the laws and customs of an unregenerate community are corrupt enough to allow it; and a large number, both of members and local preachers, use the permission thus given, and live and die slaveholders without obstruction from American Methodism.

There are men in the Northern Methodist Episcopal Church who utter a strong and constant testimony against slavery; who really and heartily labor to oppose and destroy it, though their testimony is cumbered, and, to a great extent, counteracted and nullified, by the blunder of practically recognizing the defenders of slavery as Christians. Even these men,

however, we suppose to be far outnumbered by the actual slaveholders connected with the Northern Methodist Church. This is our opinion, which may or may not be correct. What is *certain* is, that while the Northern Church admits slaveholders to its membership, its difference from the Southern Church will be one of degree only, and not of kind; only the difference between retail and wholesale. And this also is certain, that however the number of slaveholders in the Northern Methodist Church may hereafter be diminished, and however her number of abolitionists may be increased, while her discipline retains the hameful allowance of slaveholding, (in chapter vii. of part III,) and while it contains the no less shameful concession that the 'colored preachers and official members' may be stigmatized as an inferior *caste* in those Quarterly Conferences where 'the usages of the country' so stigmatize them in social life, (in chapter viii. of part I,) she may and must be ranked as A PRO-SLAVERY CHURCH.—C. K. W.

NOTE. The timely and valuable pamphlets above referred to are published as follows:—

Rev. Mr. Mattison's—'The Impending Crisis of 1860,'—by Mason Brothers, 46 Walker street, New York. Price 25 cents.

Rev. Mr. McCarter's—'Border Methodism and Border Slavery.' Price 20 cents—and

Rev. Mr. Lame's—'Maryland Slavery and Maryland Chivalry,'—Price 20 cents—by Collins, Printer, 705 Lodge Alley, Philadelphia.

Some of these may also be obtained at some Methodist Bookstores, and all of them from the publisher of *The Wesleyan*, Syracuse, N. Y.—C. K. W.

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